

Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 VALLET 00735 01 OF 04 020328Z
ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 NEA-10 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01
INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 SP-02 SS-15
ICA-11 /076 W
-----080493 020333Z /65

R 311419Z MAR 78
FM AMEMBASSY VALLETTA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8081
INFO AMEMBASSY ALGIERS
AMEMBASSY BONN
AMEMBASSY LONDON
USDOCOSOUTH NAPLES IT
AMEMBASSY PARIS
AMEMBASSY ROME
AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI
USMISSION USNATO
USCINCEUR VAIHINGEN GE

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 04 VALLETTA 00735

C O R R E C T E D C O P Y FOR GARBLED IN PARA TWO

E.O.11652: GDS
TAGS:PINT
SUBJECT: MINTOFF'S DOMESTIC PROGRAM: PROGRESS TOWARD
SOCIALISM OR THE BEGINNINGS OF DEMOCRATIC CENTRALISM?

1. SUMMARY: PRIME MINISTER MINTOFF'S LABOR GOVERNMENT IS
NOW A YEAR AND A HALF INTO ITS SECOND TERM. BASED ON ITS
PERFORMANCE DURING THIS PERIOD AND ITS BUDGET FOR FY 1979,
WHICH WAS RECENTLY APPROVED BY PARLIAMENT, A PICTURE OF
THE GOVERNMENT'S PRIORITIES FOR THE NEXT YEAR OR TWO IS
BEGINNING TO EMERGE. AS WILL BECOME APPARENT BELOW SOME
OF THE PRIORITY CHANGES MINTOFF HAS PROPOSED ARE A MATTER
OF CONCERN TO MANY OBSERVERS NOT ONLY BECAUSE OF THEIR
SUBSTANTIVE IMPLICATIONS BUT ALSO (AND POSSIBLY MORE SO)
CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 VALLET 00735 01 OF 04 020328Z

BECAUSE OF THEIR ORGANIZATIONAL AND INSTITUTIONAL RAMIFI-
CATIONS. IF THESE CHANGES ARE USED IN A DEMOCRATIC
MANNER, GREATER PARTICIPATION BY THE AVERAGE CITIZEN WILL
RESULT. THESE NEW STRUCTURES COULD, HOWEVER, BE EMPLOYED
TO INCREASE MINTOFF'S CONTROL OVER MALTESE CITIZENS,
ESPECIALLY THE RANK AND FILE OF THE MALTA LABOR PARTY AND
THE GENERAL WORKERS UNION, ALONG THE LINES OF THE

DEMOCRATIC CENTRALISM APPROACH USED BY COMMUNIST LEADERS TO ENFORCE STRICT DISCIPLINE AND SUBORDINATION TO HIGHER AUTHORITY. HOW MINTOFF INTRODUCES THESE CHANGES AND THE USE HE MAKES OF THEM AFTER THEY ARE IN PLACE WILL PROVIDE INSIGHT INTO HIS COMMITMENT TO DEMOCRATIC VALUES AND PROCESSES, A MAJOR QUESTION IN THE EYES OF MANY MALTESE (AND FOREIGNERS). BASED ON MINTOFF'S PERFORMANCE THUS FAR WE CONCLUDE THAT HE WILL CONTINUE TO GOVERN IN A BASICALLY DEMOCRATIC MANNER. END SUMMARY

2. PRIORITY CHANGES. ACCORDING TO INFLUENTIAL GOVERNMENT MINISTERS, THREE BASIC "REFORMS" WILL BE GIVEN PRIORITY THIS YEAR. FIRST, THERE WILL BE A STATUTORY FUSION OF MALTA'S LABOR PARTY (MLP) AND THE GENERAL WORKERS UNION (GWU). SECOND, THE WORKS COMMITTEE CONCEPT WILL BE EXPANDED FROM THE DRY DOCKS (WHERE THIS CONCEPT WAS INTRODUCED LAST YEAR) TO THE CIVIL SERVICE AND PARASTATAL INDUSTRIES. THIRD, EDUCATIONAL REVISIONS WILL BE INTRODUCED AT THE TERTIARY (UNIVERSITY) LEVEL.

3. THE GWU NATIONAL CONFERENCE IN JANUARY COMMISSIONED THE NATIONAL COUNCIL OF THE GWU TO PREPARE THE NECESSARY AMENDMENTS TO THE GWU STATUTES TO PROVIDE FOR FUSION WITH THE MLP. THE MLP HAD PREVIOUSLY AUTHORIZED SUCH A MERGER. THIS FUSION IS DESCRIBED BY GWU AND MLP LEADERSHIP AS A FORMAL INSTITUTIONALIZATION OF AN INFORMAL RELATIONSHIP
CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 03 VALLET 00735 01 OF 04 020328Z

WHICH HAS EXISTED FOR YEARS BETWEEN THE TWO BRANCHES OF THE WORKERS MOVEMENT. THE STATED REASON FOR CARRYING OUT THIS FUSION IS TO ENHANCE THE PARTICIPATION OF WORKERS IN THE GOVERNMENT'S ECONOMIC PLANNING AND POLICY MAKING WHICH WILL LEAD TO GREATER INDUSTRIAL PEACE AND MORE PROGRESSIVE GOVERNMENT POLICIES.

4. THE WORKS COMMITTEES, WHICH HAD PREVIOUSLY BEEN INSTITUTED ONLY AT THE GOVERNMENT-OWNED DRY DOCKS, ARE NOW BEING STARTED IN THE CIVIL SERVICE AND PARASTATAL INDUSTRIES. THESE COMMITTEES ARE COMPOSED OF WORKERS ELECTED BY THEIR CO-WORKERS TO REPRESENT THEM IN DEALINGS WITH MANAGEMENT. SEVERAL YEARS WILL PROBABLY BE REQUIRED BEFORE WORKS COMMITTEES ARE OPERATING THROUGHOUT THESE ORGANIZATIONS. THEIR BASIC FUNCTIONS ARE TO (A) IMPROVE COMMUNICATIONS BETWEEN WORKERS AND MANAGEMENT, THEREBY INCREASING WORKERS PARTICIPATION IN MANAGEMENT, (B) SERVE AS A MEANS FOR INTRODUCING NEW, INNOVATIVE PRODUCTION METHODS AND PROCESSES AMONG THE RANK AND FILE AND (C) INSURE THAT ALL WORKERS ARE CONTRIBUTING ADEQUATELY TO THE OUTPUT OF PRODUCTS OR SERVICES THE ORGANIZATIONS PRODUCE OR PROVIDE. WORKS COMMITTEES WILL NOT BE A SUBSTITUTE FOR UNIONS, ALTHOUGH LEADERSHIP POSITIONS MAY BE ENCUMBERED BY

INDIVIDUALS WHO ARE ALSO UNION OFFICE HOLDERS. UNIONS WILL STILL BE NECESSARY TO PRESERVE WORKERS' RIGHTS, TO EDUCATE WORKERS AND TO IDENTIFY LEADERSHIP QUALITIES IN INDIVIDUAL WORKERS WHO WILL BE GROOMED TO ASSUME LEADERSHIP POSITIONS.

5. THE PROPOSED EDUCATION CHANGES, WHICH ARE TO BE APPLIED TO THE UNIVERSITY OF MALTA AND THE MALTA COLLEGE OF ARTS, SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY, ARE STILL EXTREMELY VAGUE. THUS FAR GOVERNMENT SPOKESMEN HAVE TALKED IN TERMS OF THE INTRODUCTION OF A STUDENT WORKER CONCEPT (I.E., INDIVIDUALS WILL BE STUDENTS FOR SIX MONTHS AND WORKERS FOR SIX MONTHS), CURRICULUM RESTRUCTURING TO EMPHASIZE FUNCTION-

CONFIDENTIAL

NNN

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 VALLET 00735 02 OF 04 311709Z
ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 NEA-10 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01
INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 SP-02 SS-15
USIA-06 /071 W

-----061870 311734Z /43

R 311419Z MAR 78
FM AMEMBASSY VALLETTA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8082
INFO AMEMBASSY ALGIERS
AMEMBASSY BONN
AMEMBASSY LONDON
USDOCOSOUTH NAPLES IT
AMEMBASSY PARIS
AMEMBASSY ROME
AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI
USMISSION USNATO
USCINCEUR VAIHINGEN GE

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 02 OF 04 VALLETTA 00735

ALITY THEREBY INSURING THAT GRADUATES WILL BE ABLE TO OBTAIN JOBS AFTER GRADUATION, AND SALARIES FOR STUDENT/WORKERS DURING THEIR YEARS OF STUDY WHICH WILL FREE THEM FROM FINANCIAL DEPENDENCE ON THEIR PARENTS OR OTHERS. IN ORDER TO GAIN ADMITTANCE TO HIGHER EDUCATION A STUDENT WILL APPARENTLY FIRST HAVE TO OBTAIN A JOB WITH PRIVATE INDUSTRY, GOVERNMENT OR UNIONS AND BE SPONSORED BY ONE OF THESE ORGANIZATIONS.

6. GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS HAVE MENTIONED OTHER POTENTIALLY

SIGNIFICANT CHANGES BUT THESE HAVE SO FAR RECEIVED LESS ATTENTION. THEY INCLUDE A NATIONAL HEALTH INSURANCE SCHEME, THE INTRODUCTION OF NEIGHBORHOOD COMMITTEES (A LIMITED FORM OF LOCAL SELF GOVERNMENT) AND CHANGES IN THE PRESS LAW.

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 VALLET 00735 02 OF 04 311709Z

7. OBJECTIVES OF THESE "REFORMS". GOVERNMENT SPOKESMEN STATE THAT THE PRIMARY OBJECTIVE OF THESE CHANGES IS TO INCREASE PARTICIPATION OF WORKERS IN INDUSTRY, GOVERNMENT AND SOCIETY AS A WHOLE. WHILE THIS INCREASED PARTICIPATION SHOULD RESULT IN ENHANCED MATERIAL BENEFITS FOR WORKERS, IT ALSO CARRIES WITH IT THE OBLIGATION TO IMPROVE PRODUCTIVITY AND LABOR DISCIPLINE. OTHER IMPORTANT OBJECTIVES ARE TO REDUCE THE POWER OF REMAINING PRIVILEGED GROUPS IN MALTESE SOCIETY AND THE DIFFERENCES BETWEEN THE RICH AND POOR, THE WHITE COLLAR AND THE BLUE COLLAR WORKER, AND THE ELITE AND THE ORDINARY CITIZEN. FINALLY, THESE REFORMS ARE MEANT TO CONTRIBUTE TO THE STRENGTHENING OF THE WORKERS MOVEMENT WHICH WILL, IN TURN, HELP PERPETUATE A WORKERS' (I.E. MLP) GOVERNMENT.

8. SUPPORTING GOVERNMENT ACTIONS. THE GOVERNMENT HAS TAKEN A NUMBER OF OTHER STEPS TO ACHIEVE THESE OBJECTIVES. IT HAS BEEN TOUGH IN ITS TREATMENT OF NON-GWU UNIONS WHICH ARE FOR THE MOST PART WHITE COLLAR UNIONS, MANY OF WHICH REPRESENT GOVERNMENT WORKERS. THE TELEMALTA LABOR DISPUTE WAS SETTLED A FEW WEEKS AGO WITH THE ALMOST COMPLETE CAPITULATION OF THE UNION. THIS SETTLEMENT FOLLOWS THOSE INVOLVING BANK WORKERS, BAKERS AND CIVIL SERVANTS LAST YEAR WHICH AMOUNTED TO GOVERNMENT VICTORIES OVER THE UNIONS REPRESENTING THESE WORKERS. CURRENTLY, THE GOVERNMENT REFUSES TO CREATE THE EMPLOYMENT COMMISSION PROVIDED FOR BY THE CONSTITUTION OR TO DISCUSS THE ESTABLISHMENT OF ARBITRATION MACHINERY REQUIRED BY THE INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS ACT OF 1976 WITH THESE UNIONS (WHICH ARE COLLECTIVELY REPRESENTED BY THE CONFEDERATION OF MALTA TRADE UNIONS (CMTU)) ON THE GROUNDS THAT THEY CONTINUE TO SUPPORT AN ON-GOING INDUSTRIAL ACTION, THE SO-CALLED DOCTORS' STRIKE. THIS STRIKE IS INTO ITS TENTH MONTH WITH NO PROSPECT OF

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 03 VALLET 00735 02 OF 04 311709Z

RESOLUTION. THE GOVERNMENT REFUSES TO NEGOTIATE WITH THE MEDICAL ASSOCIATION OF MALTA (MAM) UNTIL THE MAM (1) WITHDRAWS ITS INDUSTRIAL ACTION AGAINST THE GOVERNMENT WHICH,

THE GOVERNMENT CLAIMS, IS A UNIVERSALLY RECOGNIZED PRE-REQUISITE FOR NEGOTIATIONS (I.E. THE GOVERNMENT IS NOT OBLIGED TO DISCUSS ANYTHING WITH STRIKERS) AND (2) ACKNOWLEDGES THE GOVERNMENT'S EXCLUSIVE AUTHORITY TO RUN THE NATIONAL HEALTH SERVICE.

9. IN HANDLING THESE DISPUTES AND OTHER FORMS OF OPPOSITION TO ITS PROPOSALS, THE GOVERNMENT HAS DEMONSTRATED ITS READINESS TO USE ALL POWERS AT ITS DISPOSAL, INCLUDING TRANSFERS OF CIVIL SERVANTS, PASSAGE OF SPECIAL LEGISLATION THROUGH THE PARLIAMENT AND REFUSAL TO NEGOTIATE. THE GOVERNMENT HAS ALSO USED ITS CONSTITUTIONAL ADMINISTRATIVE CONTROL OVER THE JUDICIARY IN ASSIGNMENT OF JUDGES ALLEGEDLY SYMPATHETIC TO GOVERNMENT POSITIONS TO HEAR CASES RELATED TO THESE ISSUES AND HAS VIGOROUSLY PURSUED LIBEL ACTIONS AGAINST PRESS CRITICS OF THE GOVERNMENT. ON ONE OCCASION, THUGS, LED BY A LABOR MP AND APPARENTLY CONDONED BY THE GOVERNMENT, WERE EMPLOYED IN AN ATTEMPT TO INTIMIDATE INDIVIDUALS OPPOSED TO THE GOVERNMENT'S EDUCATION REFORMS.

10. NATIONALIST PARTY REACTION. NATIONALIST PARTY (NP) REACTION TO THESE GOVERNMENT POLICIES AND ACTIONS HAS BEEN AT TWO LEVELS. FIRST, THE NP QUESTIONS MINTOFF'S COMMITMENT TO DEMOCRATIC PROCESSES, PRIMARILY BASED UPON HIS TACTICS IN DEALING WITH THOSE OPPOSED TO HIM. THEY CLAIM HE ABUSES GOVERNMENT POWER, REFUSES TO INFORM THE PUBLIC ADEQUATELY CONCERNING HIS PROPOSALS, WILL NOT CARRY ON A DIALOGUE WITH THE OPPOSITION WHICH REPRESENTS 49 PERCENT OF THE MALTESE PUBLIC AND EXAGGERATES THE SCOPE OF HIS

CONFIDENTIAL

NNN

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 VALLET 00735 03 OF 04 020326Z
ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 NEA-10 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01
INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 SP-02 SS-15
ICA-11 /076 W

-----080490 020332Z /65/43

R 311419Z MAR 78
FM AMEMBASSY VALLETTA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8083
INFO AMEMBASSY ALGIERS
AMEMBASSY BONN
AMEMBASSY LONDON
USDOCOSOUTH NAPLES IT

AMEMBASSY PARIS
AMEMBASSY ROME
AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI
USMISSION USNATO
USCINCEUR VAIHINGEN GE

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 03 OF 04 VALLETTA 00735

C O R R E C T E D C O P Y FOR GARBLED THRU-OUT TEXT

ELECTORAL MANDATE. THE NATIONALISTS CHARGE THAT THIS HAS RESULTED IN THE DECLINE OF INDIVIDUAL LIBERTY IN THE NAME OF THE COLLECTIVE GOOD.

11. AT A SECOND AND MORE SPECIFIC LEVEL, THE NATIONALISTS HAVE ATTACKED MINTOFF'S FAILURE TO ACHIEVE HIS ECONOMIC GOALS FOR MALTA OR TO PROVIDE AN OVER-ALL PLAN FOR MALTA'S FUTURE. THIS THEY SAY HAS LED TO A "GENERAL STATE OF UNCERTAINTY" IN THE COUNTRY. NATIONALISTS OBJECT TO THE EDUCATIONAL CHANGES ON THE GROUNDS THAT THEY ARE TOO RIGID AND TOO DEPENDENT UPON MANPOWER PROJECTIONS WHICH COULD BE WRONG, THAT STUDENTS WILL NOT BE ABLE TO OBTAIN A QUALITY EDUCATION IF THEY ARE FORCED TO WORK SIX MONTHS OUT OF EVERY YEAR, AND THAT THE SELECTION OF STUDENTS WILL BE SUBJECT TO POLITICAL ABUSE. THEY CRITICIZE THE WORKS
CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 VALLET 00735 03 OF 04 020326Z

COMMITTEES AS BEING IMPOSED ON LABORERS AT TOO RAPID A RATE WITHOUT ADEQUATE EXPLANATION TO, OR EDUCATION OF, THE WORKERS ABOUT THE ROLE AND FUNCTION OF THESE COMMITTEES. WITH RESPECT TO THE FUSION OF THE GWU WITH THE MLP, THEY ARE CONCERNED THAT THIS FUSION WILL RESULT IN THE RIGHTS OF INDIVIDUAL WORKERS BEING DISREGARDED AND WILL BRING LABOR UNIONS TOO DIRECTLY INTO POLITICS. IN THIS CONNECTION, THE RECENT PUBLIC CRITICISMS BY JOE ATTARD-KINGSWELL, FORMERLY SECRETARY GENERAL OF THE GWU AND AMBASSADOR TO US, HAS BEEN CITED APPROVINGLY IN THE NATIONALIST PRESS. KINGSWELL WARNED OF THE DANGERS OF UNIONS BECOMING AFFILIATED WITH GOVERNMENT OR POLITICAL PARTIES, NOTING THE DANGER THAT AS THE STATE BECOMES MORE CENTRALIZED, THE WORKERS' INTERESTS MAY BE SACRIFICED FOR THE BENEFIT OF STATE POLICIES. HE ALSO REPORTEDLY SAID THAT MALTA IS CURRENTLY UNDER A "BENEVOLENT DICTATORSHIP."

12. THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THIS CRITICISM ON THE MALTESE PUBLIC IS RATHER DIFFICULT TO ASSESS AS THE DEGREE OF POLITICAL POLARIZATION HERE IS GREAT; ONLY A FEW FENCE SITTERS ARE OPEN TO THE ARGUMENTS OFFERED BY EITHER SIDE. THE NATIONALISTS APPEAR TO BE AT THEIR MOST PERSUASIVE WHEN ARGUING THAT MINTOFF'S STYLE IS GRADUALLY ERODING

DEMOCRATIC VALUES IN MALTA. THEY SEEM LESS PERSUASIVE IN THEIR PURPORTED CONCERNS ABOUT THE SPECIFIC REFORMS PROPOSED BY THE GOVERNMENT AS THEY HAVE CHANGED MANY OF THEIR PAST POLICIES TO CONFORM WITH PREVIOUS REFORMS INTRODUCED BY EARLIER LABOR GOVERNMENTS (SUCH AS MINIMUM WAGE, PENSIONS, ETC.) AND NOW TEND TO CRITICIZE THEM IN RATHER CONTRADICTORY WAYS, SOMETIMES CLAIMING THEY ARE INADEQUATE, AND AT OTHERS THAT THEY ARE TOO EXPENSIVE FOR MALTA'S PRIVATE SECTOR. EVEN THEIR ALLEGED CONCERN ABOUT

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 03 VALLET 00735 03 OF 04 020326Z

DEMOCRATIC VALUES AND HUMAN RIGHTS IS SOMEWHAT SUSPECT BECAUSE OF THEIR PREVIOUS RECORD OF OPEN COLLUSION WITH THE CHURCH IN THE 1960S WHEN THE CHURCH ATTEMPTED TO USE ITS SPIRITUAL POWERS OVER THE ELECTORATE IN AN INAPPROPRIATE MANNER (THREAT OF INTERDICTION, WITHHOLDING OF THE SACRAMENTS AND OTHER SANCTIONS AGAINST LABOR SUPPORTERS) TO DEFEAT THE MLP.

13. WHAT IS MINTOFF TRYING TO ACHIEVE? AS HAS BEEN OBSERVED BY OTHERS, MINTOFF'S POLICIES AND TACTICS ARE A CURIOUS COMBINATION OF SEVERAL SOMEWHAT CONTRADICTORY ELEMENTS. AT THE IDEOLOGICAL LEVEL HE IS UNDOUBTEDLY COMMITTED TO SOCIALISM. HE VIGOROUSLY DENIES THAT COMMUNISM IS A POSSIBLE MODEL FOR MALTA, BUT IS APPARENTLY SO DETERMINED TO REDUCE DIFFERENCES AMONG CLASSES, I.E. ELIMINATE WHAT HE PERCEIVES AS A PRIVILEGED ELITE, THAT HE WILL, IF NECESSARY, PURSUE THIS OBJECTIVE IN A MANNER WHICH REDUCES SOME INDIVIDUAL LIBERTIES. HIS POLICIES ALSO HAVE A STRONG IDEALISTIC COMPONENT IN THAT THEY ARE DESIGNED TO HELP IMPROVE THE LOT OF THE POOREST ELEMENTS IN MALTESE SOCIETY AND NOT JUST REDUCE THE WEALTH OF THE RICH.

14. AS A POLITICAL LEADER, MINTOFF IS A PRAGMATIST, BORDERING ON THE PURITANICAL, WHO WANTS WORKERS TO WORK HARDER -- BOTH ON THE JOB AND AS PARTICIPANTS IN INDUSTRY, GOVERNMENT AND SOCIETY AS A WHOLE. AS FOR ECONOMIC POLICIES, HE STRESSES THAT GIVEN MALTA'S SITUATION A MIXED ECONOMY IS BEST, AT LEAST FOR NOW. HE PROPOUNDS AN EVOLUTIONARY, NOT REVOLUTIONARY METHOD OF CHANGE IN THIS AREA.

15. MINTOFF HAS STRONG TENDENCIES TOWARD AUTHORITARIANISM IN GOVERNMENT AND MLP ADMINISTRATION WHICH MAKES HIM VULNERABLE TO NATIONALIST CRITICISM THAT HE WANTS TO CONTROL EVERYTHING. ALTHOUGH ONLY MINTOFF'S STRONGEST

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 04 VALLET 00735 03 OF 04 020326Z

CONFIDENTIAL

NNN

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 VALLET 00735 04 OF 04 010753Z

ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 NEA-10 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01

INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 SP-02 SS-15

USIA-06 /071 W

-----073412 010801Z /11

R 311419Z MAR 78

FM AMEMBASSY VALLETTA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8084

INFO AMEMBASSY ALGIERS

AMEMBASSY BONN

AMEMBASSY LONDON

USDOCOSOUTH NAPLES IT

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY ROME

AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI

USMISSION USNATO

USCINCEUR VAIHINGEN GE

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 04 OF 04 VALLETTA 00735

CRITICS CONTEND THAT HE IS VIOLATING THE LETTER OF THE LAW, HIS WILLINGNESS TO USE HIS AUTHORITY TO THE MAXIMUM, SOMETIMES IN THE PROCESS DOING VIOLENCE TO THE SPIRIT OF DEMOCRATIC VALUES, LENDS SUBSTANCE TO THESE CONCERNS AS DOES HIS WILLINGNESS TO DAMAGE OR EVEN DESTROY SOME MALTESE INSTITUTIONS, IF NECESSARY, TO ACHIEVE HIS ENDS. HIS CAMPAIGN AGAINST MALTA'S MEDICAL DOCTORS HAS DRIVEN MANY OF THEM ABROAD. HE APPEARS TO BE WILLING TO SACRIFICE THE UNIVERSITY OF MALTA (INCLUDING ITS MEDICAL SCHOOL), IF HE MUST, IN ORDER TO CARRY OUT HIS EDUCATIONAL CHANGES. HE HAS ALSO SHOWN A WILLINGNESS TO EMPLOY QUESTIONABLE PROCEDURES AGAINST NON-GWU UNIONS AND A CASE CAN BE MADE THAT HE IS OUT TO DESTROY THEM, GOVERNMENT DENIALS NOTWITHSTANDING. IT IS THE ABSENCE OF A SPIRIT OF COMPROMISE AND CONCILIATION THAT IS MOST WORRYING ABOUT HIS POLITICAL METHODS AND STYLE EVEN THOUGH
CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 VALLET 00735 04 OF 04 010753Z

HE HAS SOME (MARGINAL) RIGHT TO CLAIM THAT HIS ELECTORAL MANDATE OF 1976 JUSTIFIES HIS ACTIONS.

16. BASED ON MINTOFF'S PERFORMANCE THUS FAR, WE DO NOT CONCLUDE THAT DEMOCRATIC CENTRALISM IS AROUND THE CORNER. THE MERITS OF HIS PROGRAM CAN BE DEBATED BUT HE HAS NOT LIMITED ANY BASIC FREEDOMS SUCH AS THE PRESS, PUBLIC ASSEMBLY, GENERAL POLITICAL ACTIVITY, RELIGION AND SO ON, IN ANY FUNDAMENTAL WAY. WHILE WE ARE LESS THAN ENAMORED WITH HIS STYLE AND SOME OF HIS TACTICS, HIS BEHAVIOR HAS TO BE JUDGED WITHIN THE CONTEXT OF MALTESE POLITICS, WHICH HISTORICALLY HAS BEEN A FAIRLY ROUGH AND READY AFFAIR. HE IS CERTAINLY AUTHORITARIAN IN APPROACH BUT STRONG LEADERSHIP IN IMPLEMENTING A POLITICAL PROGRAM DOES NOT NECESSARILY LEAD TO DESTRUCTION OF DEMOCRATIC INSTITUTIONS.

17. ON THE OTHER HAND, THERE ARE GROUNDS FOR SOME CONCERN ABOUT THE FUTURE OF DEMOCRACY IN MALTA. THE STRENGTH OF DEMOCRATIC INSTITUTIONS IN MALTA HAS NOT BEEN TESTED SINCE INDEPENDENCE AND IT WOULD BE EASY TO CONCLUDE THAT THE ONLY APPARENT BARRIER TO THE IMPOSITION OF SOME KIND OF DEMOCRATIC CENTRALISM LEADING TO AN INCREASINGLY TOTALITARIAN STATE IS MINTOFF'S OWN COMMITMENT TO DEMOCRACY. SHOULD HE CHOOSE, HE MIGHT SUCCEED IN IMPOSING SUCH A SYSTEM ON THE MALTESE, FACILITATED BY THESE REFORMS. POLITICAL ABUSE OF SOME OF THE STRUCTURES HE IS CREATING (I.E. WORKS COMMITTEES, UNION OF MLP AND GWU), CANNOT BE RULED OUT ALTOGETHER, PARTICULARLY IF THE GOING GETS TOUGH AS MARCH, 1979 APPROACHES. THEN THE TEMPTATION TO EMPLOY INCREASINGLY TOTALITARIAN TECHNIQUES, PERHAPS IN THE NAME OF NATIONAL DISCIPLINE TO GET THROUGH A TIME OF TRIAL, MAY BECOME DIFFICULT FOR MINTOFF TO WITHSTAND. THERE IS ALSO THE POSSIBILITY THAT MORE RADICAL ELEMENTS

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 03 VALLET 00735 04 OF 04 010753Z

IN HIS PARTY COULD PUSH HIM IN THIS DIRECTION OR EVEN TAKE OVER FROM HIM. THEN REAL PROBLEMS FOR DEMOCRACY COULD ARISE. BUT AS MINTOFF APPEARS TO BE FIRMLY IN CHARGE AND STILL IN GOOD HEALTH, THE LIKELIHOOD OF SUCH DEVELOPMENTS OCCURRING IN THE NEXT YEAR OR SO IS, IN OUR VIEW, VERY LOW. LAINGEN

CONFIDENTIAL

NNN

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 jan 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: SOCIALISM, GOVERNMENT REFORM, DEMOCRACY, PRIME MINISTER, FORM OF GOVERNMENT, POLITICAL SITUATION, PROGRAMS (PROJECTS), REORGANIZATIONS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 31 mar 1978
Decaption Date: 01 jan 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 20 Mar 2014
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1978VALLET00735
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D780145-0723, D780143-0944, D780141-0532
Format: TEL
From: VALLETTA
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1978/newtext/t1978031/aaaaaajz.tel
Line Count: 489
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: d0ec80b7-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION EUR
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 9
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 24 may 2005
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 3094794
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: MINTOFF'S DOMESTIC PROGRAM: PROGRESS TOWARD SOCIALISM OR THE BEGINNINGS OF DEMOCRATIC CENTRALISM?
TAGS: PINT, MT, (MINTOFF, DOMINIC)
To: STATE
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odb://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/d0ec80b7-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Sheryl P. Walter
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
20 Mar 2014
Markings: Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014